

Message Text

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ACTION SCS-03

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 SCA-01 L-03 H-01 DHA-02
SSO-00 PRS-01 SS-15 A-01 NSC-05 NSCE-00 OPR-02
/041 W

-----231934Z 010230 /41

O 231840Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1779

AMCONSUL RECIFE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRASILIA 4145

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC, PFOR, BR

SUBJ: W/W -- ARRESTS: (CAPUANO, THOMAS) (ROSENBAUGH, LAWRENCE)

REF: A. RECIFE 0068 B. BRASILIA 4123 C. BRASILIA 4092;
AND PREVIOUS

1. AT 4 P.M. ON MAY 21, DCM MET AMBASSADOR ARAUJO, CHIEF OF FONMIN DEPARTMENT OF THE AMERICAS, REGARDING ARREST AND DETENTION OF CAPUANO AND ROSEBAUGH. DCM OUTLINED FACTS IN THE CASE, INFORMED ARAUJO OF PROTEST TO BE LODGED BY CONSUL IN RECIFE, AND READ HIM OUR PLANNED RESPONSES TO ANY PRESS QUESTIONS WE MIGHT RECEIVE (REFTEL B). A COPY OF THE LATTER WAS LEFT WITH ARAUJO, WHOSE GENERAL REACTION TO PRESENTATION WAS EXPRESSION OF THANKS AND STATEMENT THAT HE WOULD INFORM FONMIN'S SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE MATTER.

2. AT 1 P.M. ON MAY 22, DCM CALLED UPON ARAUJO AT LATTER'S REQUEST. ARAUJO SAID THAT INFORMATION PROVIDED BY DCM HAD GONE THROUGH SECRETARY GENERAL AND FOREIGN MINISTER TO PRESIDENT GEISEL, AND THENCE TO JUSTICE MINISTER FALCAO, WHO HAD DIRECTED FEDERAL POLICE TO LOOK INTO MATTER (NOTE PARA 1, REFTTEL A). HE ALSO INDICATED THAT PERNAMBUCO GOVERNOR CAVALCANTI WAS IN TOUCH WITH CONSUL IN RECIFE
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(NOTE PARA 4 AND 5, REFTTEL A) AND HAD ORDERED AN INVESTIGATION. IN VIEW OF FOREGOING, CONTINUED ARAUJO, AND SINCE USG HAD THE FACTS FROM CAPUANO AND ROSEBAUGH THEMSELVES, FOREIGN MINISTER HOPED IT MIGHT BE UNNECESSARY FOR EMBASSY PRESS RESPONSES TO REFER TO ARTICLE IN ARCHDIOCESE NEWSPAPER, WHICH WAS A DELICATE MATTER SINCE CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS AUTHORITIES ARE INVOLVED IN CONTRARY POSITIONS. (EMBASSY

COMMENT: DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, OF COURSE, THAT THERE EXISTS A LONGSTANDING TENSION BETWEEN GOB AND THE RECIFE ARCHDIOCESAN AUTHORITIES HEADED BY CONTROVERSIAL ARCHBISHOP DOM HELDER CAMARA.)

3. AT 6 P.M. ON MAY 22, DCM CALLED ARAUJO BACK TO REPORT THAT IN ITS PRESS GUIDANCE, EMBASSY WAS REPLACING SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO CHURCH NEWSPAPER WITH GENERIC REFERENCE TO PRESS REPORTS. (SAME INFORMATION RELAYED TO DEPARTMENT MAY 22 BY TELECON). DCM CONVEYED SUBSTANCE OF REPORT RECEIVED EARLIER THAT DAY FROM CONSUL HOFFENBERG (REFTEL A), AND COMMENTED PRIVATELY THAT HE HOPED STATE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC SECURITY WOULD NOT PERSIST IN WEAK EXPLANATION (RATIONALE) FOR ARRESTS GIVEN CONSUL BASED ON IMPOSSIBILITY OF IDENTIFYING THE TWO ARRESTED MEN. HE NOTED THAT, FACT THAT TWO AMERICAN CLERICS DID NOT LOOK LIKE CLERICS AND WERE IN SLUM AREA COULD EXPLAIN THEIR BEING APPROACHED INITIALLY BY POLICE ON BASIS OF MISTAKEN IDENTITY, BUT COULD NOT ACCOUNT FOR THEIR BEING DETAINED THREE DAYS AFTER REVIEW OF THEIR ID DOCUMENTS AND DESPITE THEIR EFFORTS TO CONTACT THEIR RELIGIOUS HEADQUARTERS AND CONSUL. (SIMILAR "EXPLANATION" HAD BEEN GIVEN IN VERY BRIEF FORM BY ARAUJO HIMSELF IN THE MEETING EARLIER THAT DAY).

4. EMBASSY AS YET HAS RECEIVED NO PRESS QUERIES ABOUT THIS CASE. SINCE EARLIER REPORTED INQUIRY BY WASHINGTON POST CORRESPONDENT, CONSULATE HAS BEEN APPROACHED ONLY BY LOCAL O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO CORRESPONDENT, WHO PHONED MORNING OF MAY 22 TO INQUIRE ABOUT THE CONSULATE'S ACTIONS, THE PERNAMBUCO STATE INQUIRY WHICH HAS BEEN LAUNCHED, AND TO CONFIDENTIAL

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ASK WHETHER OR NOT THE INCIDENT WILL AFFECT MRS. CARTER'S VISIT. CONSUL FOLLOWED EMBASSY'S GUIDANCE IN RESPONDING. PRESS REPORTING OF CASE WAS NIL ON MAY 23 AND (OUTSIDE RECIFE) MAY 22, APART FROM ARTICLE ON INSIDE PAGE OF MAY 23 O GLOBO, WHICH REPORTED THE DETENTION OF THE TWO ARRESTING OFFICERS, THE GOVERNOR'S DIRECTIVE OPENING AN INQUIRY, AND HIS ASSURANCES THAT THE OFFICERS FACE SUMMARY EXPULSION FROM THE FORCE, DEPENDING UPON THE RESULTS OF THAT INQUIRY.
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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 23-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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Disposition History: n/a
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Disposition Remarks:
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TAGS: CASC, PFOR, SOPN, BR, (CAPUANO, THOMAS), (ROSENBAUGH, LAWRENCE)
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